



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

prophet of that name, stands unimpaired as a signal prophecy of the suffering Saviour and the risen Redeemer. Likewise it is with all Old Testament prophecy. The lines of its prefigurement of and preparation for Christ and Christianity can never be obliterated. But while modern biblical criticism has not modified the conception of the substance of Old Testament prophecy, it has, to a considerable extent, changed the conception of its form, in three ways: (1) The older writers frequently did not distinguish clearly between the historical meaning of passages and the final meaning discerned in the light of the fulfillment. They often made the former identical with the latter. The New Testament writers usually, if not always, interpret the Old Testament simply in the light of its fulfillment, and are at no pains to give the historic meaning. Nor do they distinguish between direct and indirect prophecies. A recognition of these facts is necessary to a correct understanding of the applications of the Old Testament in the New. (2) Since prophecy was universally conditioned in form by the period of its announcement, modern criticism finds such a conditioning element in the records of primeval and patriarchal antiquity. The line cannot be drawn with perfect exactness between the original event and its later interpretation. The present forms of the patriarchal promises were determined in some degree by the date and authorship of their record, but doubtless they have a real historic value. (3) Modern biblical criticism has also taken away some of the importance once attached to the literal fulfillments of prophecy. Great stress used to be laid upon these, and they have a permanent significance. But the supreme value is in the deeper, spiritual fulfillment.

Prof. Curtis has written so concisely that it is difficult to condense his words. His statement of the content of Old Testament prophecy is particularly good. The confidence which he expresses, that current criticism has only to do with its unessential characteristics, may well be shared by all who are fearful of the results of Biblical scholarship. The lines of modification along which he says the better conception of Old Testament prophecy is now being developed, are worthy of the attention, careful thought and study of all Bible students.

---

**Inspiration.\***—It cannot be too often repeated that the only legitimate method of determining what is involved in the idea of inspiration, or under what conditions it manifests itself, is by an examination of the books that are described as inspired, and an impartial study of the facts presented by them. The Bible does not define it, nor does it contain any warrant for the verbal theories advanced by some speculative theologians. It lays no claim to absolute and universal inerrancy. Without pretending to define inspiration, or to determine the mystery of its operation, we may, I suppose, say that what we mean by it is, an influence which gave to those who received it a unique and extraordinary *spiritual insight*, enabling them thereby, without superseding or suppressing the human faculties, but rather using them as its instruments, to declare in different degrees, and in accordance with the needs or circumstances of particular ages or particular occasions, the mind and purpose of God. Every true and noble thought of man is indeed, in a sense, inspired of God; but with the biblical writers the purifying and illuminating Spirit must have been present in some special and exceptional measure. Nevertheless, in the words of the prophet or other inspired writer, there is a human element not less than a divine element, and neither of these must be ignored. The

\* By Prof. S. R. Driver, D. D., in *Magazine of Christian Literature*, Jan., 1892.

divine truth is always presented through the human organ, and is thus, so to say, colored by the individuality of the inspired agent by whom it is enunciated. Further, it is impossible to close our eyes to the fact that its enunciations are sometimes relative rather than absolute; they are adapted to the circumstances of particular ages, they may even be limited by the spiritual capacity of the particular writer, or in the case of his being an historian, by the materials or sources of information which he had at his disposal. The revelation of the Old Testament is avowedly progressive: the teaching in its earlier parts may naturally therefore be expected to be imperfect as compared with that which is given in its later parts, or which is to be found in the New Testament. We cannot take at random a passage from the inspired volume, and say, without qualification or comparison with other passages, that it is absolute truth, or the pure word of God, or an infallible guide to conduct or character. Neither Scripture itself, nor the judgment of the Church, authorizes us to affirm that every statement, or even every book, stands upon the same moral or religious plane, or is in the same measure the expression of the divine mind; the influences of time and place, of circumstances and situation, of scope and aim, of temper and opportunity, must all be taken into account, before we can rightly judge of the precise sense in which parts of Scripture are to be regarded as the word of God. Does not the expression "Word of God," as a term descriptive of the entire Bible, sometimes give rise to misunderstanding? It is at least worthy of consideration whether the *record* of a revelation, though legitimately termed "inspired," is itself legitimately regarded as identical with the "Word of God." Nothing is more destructive of the just claims of Christianity than a false theory of inspiration. Let us, while we adhere firmly to the *fact* of inspiration, refrain from defining, and especially from limiting, the range or mode of its operation, until we have familiarized ourselves, as well as may be, with the varied contents, and with the often remarkable relations subsisting between the different parts of the volume which we term inspired. When we have done this, it will hardly fail but that our conception of its scope will be broadened and enlarged.

The matter of the inspiration of the Bible is receiving the attention of the Christian Church to-day as never before. The time seems to have come for a deliberate definition of this doctrine. The scrutiny and scholarship brought to bear upon it cannot be any too minute or thorough; nor can true Christian breadth and wisdom be spared. The consensus of opinion will ultimately decide the problem, and to this end we are receiving candid expressions of their views from scholars everywhere. Let all of them receive dispassionate, large-minded consideration. To this important study Dr. Driver's article brings material assistance.

---

**Composition of the Pentateuch.\***—It is a mistake to suppose that those who do not agree with the advocates of the current analysis of the Pentateuch reject altogether the theory that original ancient documents may, to some extent, lie at the basis of the so-called "Mosaic" books. On the contrary, they regard it as not only possible, but highly probable. It is reasonable to suppose that before Moses' day the matter contained in the earlier chapters of the Bible had become more or less fixed in a written form; and it is also a tolerably safe conclusion from the literary phenomena of the books, especially of the introduction to Genesis. Enough is now known of the language of the Semitic peoples to make it no rash hypothesis that Abraham, when he entered Canaan, brought

\* By Prof. E. C. Bissell, D. D., in *Christian Union*, Dec. 26, 1891.